

SN 10/625,763
Docket No. S-100,646
In Response to Office Action dated December 6, 2005
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REMARKS

Claims 31-36 are currently pending in the application. Examiner has rejected Claims 31-36 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Lidzey (U.S. Patent No. 5,441,648).

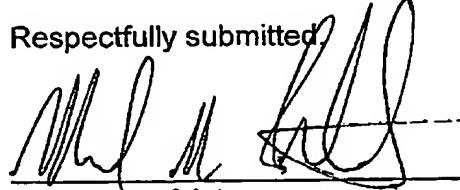
Applicants acknowledge that independent Claim 31 may be considered obvious in light of Lidzey. However, Applicants draw the Examiner's attention to Claims 32 and 33, where the use of a remnant magnetic field matrix is used to accomplish the magnetic separation, instead of an active magnet. Nowhere in Lidzey is it taught or suggested to use a remnant magnetic field matrix. In fact, Lidzey only teaches the use of a magnetic ball matrix (active magnet) for separation (Col.2 Lines 43-46; Col 3, Lines 2-12).

Therefore, Applicants have amended Claim 31 to incorporate the limitations of Claims 32 and 33, canceled Claims 32 and 33, and amended Claim 34 to depend from now amended Claim 31.

The Examiner is requested to allow Claims 31, 34-36, and to pass this case to issue.

Applicant's attorney would be pleased to further discuss this matter by telephone with the Examiner if the Examiner concludes such a discussion would assist in moving this case to issue. No new matter has been added as a result of this response.

Respectfully submitted,



Signature of Attorney

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